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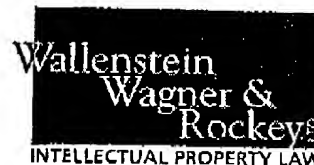
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TO:	Examiner Donald R. Valentine	FROM:	Keith V. Rockey
COMPANY:	U.S. Patent Office, Art Unit 1742	DATE:	4/30/2004
FAX NUMBER:	1-703-872-9306	TOTAL NO. OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER:	4
PHONE NUMBER:		SENDER'S REFERENCE NUMBER:	114183/00010
RE:	Request for Declaration of Interference under 37 C.F.R. § 1.606	YOUR REFERENCE NUMBER:	Confirmation No. 4366 Application No. 09/977,410

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NOTES/COMMENTS:

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## IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s): Lyndon W. Graham, et al.

Appl. No.: 09/977,410

Conf. No.: 4366

Filed: October 15, 2001

Title: ELECTROPLATING SYSTEM HAVING AUXILIARY  
ELECTRODE EXTERIOR TO MAIN REACTOR CHAMBER  
FOR CONTACT CLEANING OPERATIONS

Art Unit: 1742

Examiner: Donald R. Valentine

Docket No.: 114183-10

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REQUEST FOR DECLARATION OF INTERFERENCE  
UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.606

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Applicants in the above-captioned application hereby respectfully request that the Examiner in charge of the present application forward the application to the Interference Branch for declaration of an interference between this application and U.S. Patent No. 6,132,587. The grounds for this request are as follows.

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Request for Declaration of Interference  
April 30, 2004


The present application was filed October 15, 2001 and requested that an interference be declared between this application and claims of the '587 patent above. Applicants herein copied claims 1, 2, 5, and 19 from the '587 patent as application claims 35, 36, 37, and 38, respectively, in this application. In the most recent Office Action, the Examiner allowed claim 35 (corresponding to claim 1 of the '587 patent) but rejected the remaining claims over the prior art. Applicants' attorney accordingly telephoned the Examiner, and advised the Examiner that an interference should be declared under 37 C.F.R. § 1.606. That regulation prescribes, as a condition precedent to the declaration of an interference between an application and an issued patent, that the Examiner must determine that there is patentable subject matter in the application. The Examiner has thus indicated that claim 35 is allowed and therefore the interference should be declared.

As Applicants' attorney pointed out to the Examiner, the issues respecting the remaining claims can be dealt with in the interference proceeding. Either those claims should be found patentable to Applicants or the same claims must be declared unpatentable to the patentee as well.

In any event, Applicants believe that the appropriate course of action is to have the interference declared forthwith and a notice to that effect suspending prosecution and indicating that the file has been sent to the Interference Branch is respectfully solicited.

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Request for Declaration of Interference  
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Respectfully submitted,

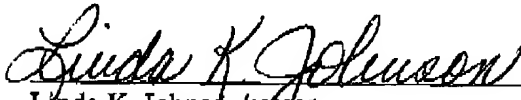
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Keith V. Rockey  
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April 30, 2004

**CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION**

I hereby certify that this document is being facsimile transmitted to Examiner Valentine, Art Unit No. 1742, at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to Fax No. (703) 872-9306 on April 30, 2004.

  
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Linda K. Johnson/199/25